

# A lightweight contender

New  
woodworking



**Bill Cain** checks out the T3 router from Trend

If you happen to be looking for a new lightweight variable speed router for less than £50 including the dreaded VAT, the T3 from Trend may be just what you are looking for.

## What you see is what you get

Trend's latest addition to their range of routers is classified as a lightweight machine, aimed at the DIY enthusiast and hobbyist. It has a 550W variable speed motor that runs at between 8,000 and 32,000 rpm. It comes complete in a custom blow-moulded plastic 'Kit Case' along with a nice selection of extras, all of which are listed below. It will accept 1/4in, 6mm or 8mm dia. shanked cutters up to a maximum of 30mm dia.

## Construction

For a lightweight router the T3 sports a robust conventional construction. There are good-quality light alloy die castings

## Specifications

- Model Trend T3
- Voltage 240V
- Power Input 550W
- No load speed 8,000-32,000rpm
- Max plunge 35mm (with depth dust/chip chute removed)
- Max cutter dia. 30mm
- Collet sizes 6mm, 1/4in and 8mm
- Price (RRP) £46.94 (inc VAT)

## Included accessories

- Storage case
- Adjustable side fence
- Dust/chip extractor chute
- 16mm dia. steel guide bush
- 6mm, 1/4in and 8mm collets
- Spanners/keys
- Instruction manual



PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

## PLUS POINTS

- Excellent value for money
- Ideal starter set
- Robust construction
- Trend quality

## MINUS POINTS

- Slight 'play' between the motor and base
- Rough plunge action



ABOVE The disassembled base and motor body

LEFT The T3 with its Kit Case and accessories

for the plunge base and motor mountings, chrome-plated tubular steel plunge bars and a moulded plastic motor case. The adjustable all-steel fence is faced with plastic so as to prevent marking the work, and along with an extraction chute (one of the supplied extras) it can be removed when not required.

Being fully compatible with its bigger brother the T5, a full range of accessories is available from Trend. 'Spares' of bits that often get lost, broken or worn out are also available.

The T3 can be used freehand or inverted in a table. The motor unit can even be quickly removed and used as a lightweight grinder or power rasp. Having a 43mm dia. motor collar, it can be fitted into an ordinary drill stand.

Cutter depth control is via a conventional three-stage turret and the depth of plunge may be locked at any point of its travel. □

## Contact details

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## The verdict

I have had a T3 in use in my home workshop for a while and my findings are generally very positive. Sure, there are a few gripes – tilting between the plunge base and its rods as the plunge height is locked, a rough plunge action mechanism which requires a little grease – but then nothing is perfect, and for less than £50 you can't really complain.

I'd recommend putting a 'fine height adjuster' on your shopping list, as with all the routers I have used (including this one) I find this greatly adds to ease of use and accuracy. And if shopping for cutters, go for ones with long shanks (say 38mm plus). Shank lengths vary quite a bit between suppliers and some of the 'Starter' sets can be a bit on the short side, limiting on occasions their intended application.

Overall though I was most impressed with the T3 and with all the bonus goodies Trend throw in, for £47 it's a deal – or should that be steal?